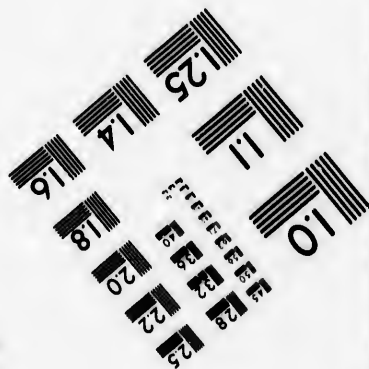
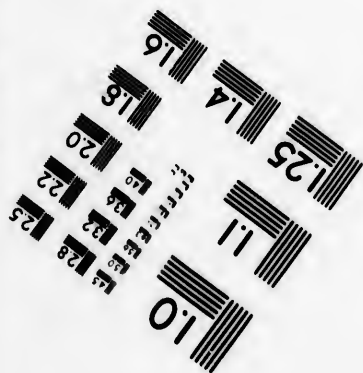
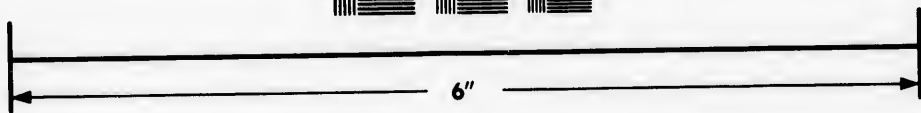
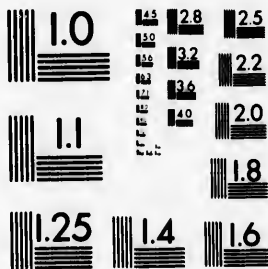


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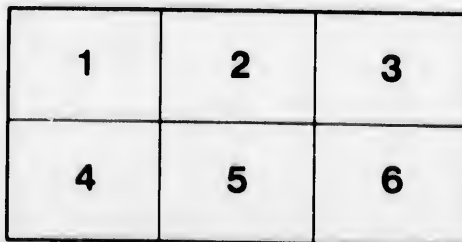
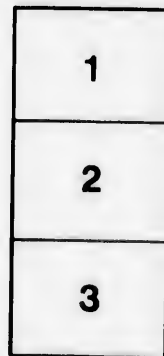
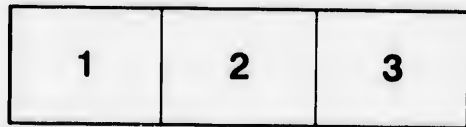
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of Victoria is also present the House presents a brilliant and imposing spectacle. The session lasts for about a couple of months, and prayers are read every day by the ministers of the various denominations in turn—by the Lord Bishop of the diocese, and also by his curates, and by the Baptist, Wesleyan, and the Presbyterian ministers. (Gladstone) has not only declined the invitation given to them. This arrangement, which is accepted as the natural thing by all Canadians, somewhat surprised us English Dissenters.

The present Provincial Parliament is not destitute either of orators or wits. The Hon. Mr. Robinson, Provincial Secretary, whose recent speech on the proposed grant to the Canadian Pacific Railway, in consideration of the extension of the line from Port Moody to Coal Harbour, gained a strong vote for the Government, is perhaps considered both by political friends and opponents to be the orator of the day. The speech on the extension of the national railway that "would embrace the Orient and the Occident," and foretold the hour to be fast approaching when "commerce would come and bow at the bay of Columbia." As specimen of native wit, I may quote Mr. Dunsmuir, who, when a well-known lawyer, moved the resolution that the Government be henceforth excluded from the province, at once proposed as an amendment that "no lawyer should be allowed to defend them in court," and "no coal merchant be allowed to sell them coal," he himself being the great coal proprietor.

All male householders who have resided one year in the province enjoy the franchise, while all married women vote along with their husbands for the election of school trustees, unmarried female householders not enjoying the privilege.

In front of the Government buildings well kept lawns, dotted over with ornamental shrubs, slope down to the road which skirts one side of the harbour. Here, by the kind permission of Admiral Lyons the band of Her Majesty's ship "Vulture" played over five times a day during the last summer; and when the season's cricket matches were over on Beacon Hill, the Government grounds became the general holiday rendezvous of Victoria. Buggies, low phaetons, and basket carriages, generally drawn by their owners—for Victoria does not have many fine horses—along with coachman—and occasionally one or two girls and men on horseback would assemble between three and four o'clock, and take up positions on the drive, while those who had walked would find seats on the steps and terraces, or loiter on the grass. Spectators would see fine Victoria girls, very steady ponies, that a timid lady may drive without fear, and will patiently submit to be led to fences or posts while their mistresses pay calls and do their shopping, are the favourite animals. However, the spirited white charger of Major and Mrs. Gair, who, with martial legions, rides out to Victoria every day from his suburban villa, adapts himself to the ways of the country, and does not disdain to be tied to a post outside the Custom House and Union Club doors.

At these Saturday afternoon gatherings in the Government grounds last summer Admiral Lyons and his fellow officers were well-known figures; indeed, without the naval elements Victorian society would lack its salt. There is always a man-of-war stationed in the spacious harbour of Esquimalt, and the officers relieve the daily monotony of their lives by giving dinners, lunches, and afternoon dances on board to those residents of Victoria who leave cards for them. The Victorians respond to these civilities by inviting the officers to their picnics and tennis parties. (The decent ladies are not invited to a tennis and dancing afternoon walk all through the summer and autumn, and the young midshipmen especially display great zeal and energy on these occasions. The officers bring with them the latest fashion and latest slang of London society; and it is in some measure owing to the aid thus received that Victorian girls keep abreast with the times and retain the style that in many cases has been acquired in an English boarding school. But in other ways the navy is a link between this distant colony and the "old country." The course of the war in Egypt, for instance, is followed with keener personal interest from the fact that several of the officers now distinguishing themselves on the Nile have been entertained and received as familiar guests in Victorian houses.)

One thing that especially strikes a stranger, on first mixing with Victorian society is the objection the more fashionable people have to look upon themselves as colonists. One explanation of this is, doubtless, the youth of the colony. The elder people have all been born in England, and have kept up a constant intercourse with home, often sending their children there to be educated; and thus they do not look upon themselves as other than English people. Many of the Hudson Bay Company's officials, who were for the most part intelligent Scotchmen, in the early days of the settlement married Indian wives; but their children generally consider themselves as belonging to their father's people, and often speak with an accent that would do credit to the Hebrides or even to a lowland county. But one could hardly offend an old British Columbian settler more seriously than by assuming him to be a Canadian. The jealousy of Canada and of Canadian influence has, until recently, been a strong feeling; and Canadians have been looked upon as intruders, wishing to reap the good things they have had no share in producing. This feeling, however, is already much modified, and will die away altogether in the future. Between the different provinces of the Dominion is facilitated by direct railway communication.

During the past year or two a great many young Englishmen have arrived in the Province. The sort of men who have been termed in business habits, and command some capital, do well. The young men of good family, for whom no fitting career presents itself at home, and who come out with a few hundred pounds in their pockets, and with vague ideas of farming or cattle raising, are often much disappointed with the realities that meet them. British Columbia is not an agricultural country; it will always be cheaper to import wheat and other grain from the great prairies of the North-West Territory than to grow them here. It has been described as "a sea of mountains." In these mountains are hidden vast treasures of coal and iron, which will prove a source of strength in the future. The young men who say "You know what I mean, don't you know?" young men helplessly content them. Among these mountains, and closely shut in by them, are high valleys, or table lands, of park-like character, which are admirably adapted to cattle raising. But these days, and two or three days' journey from the railway line, and the traveller along the Fraser knows nothing of them. The cultivation of fruit, at a point as near the Rocky Mountains as is practicable, probably offers the most promising chance to the man of small capital. Victoria is well and cheaply supplied with fruit from California; but fruit growers on the mainland will have the whole of the North West Territories as far as Winnipeg thrown open to them as a market by the Canadian Pacific Railway. But, alas, the working man, whose family in the busy season will rise with the dawn and help all day with the tedious work of gathering in the fruit, has again the pull over the gentleman.

The timber lands of British Columbia are valuable and extensive, and the lumber trade is already of large dimensions. Besides the various saw-

mills supplying the local demand, which have lately been greatly increased by the construction of the Nanaimo and Esquimalt Railway, there are two mills on the mainland coast which carry on a large shipping business.

The canning of salmon, chiefly for exportation to England, has not been very much extended in the last year, but it is expected that it will be increased. If a method could be adopted by which the salmon could be successfully canned, there would be great hope for the revival of this industry.

About seventy-five miles to the north of Victoria, on the coast, is Nanaimo, a mining town in the centre of a great coal district. The most important mines that are at present worked in British Columbia are at Wellington, six miles from Nanaimo. An island railway, which should connect Nanaimo and Nanaimo, and facilitate communication with the Canadian Pacific Railway terminus on the mainland has long been talked of, and last summer the country was surveyed for this purpose and the line projected. The railway is being constructed by a syndicate, composed chiefly of American capitalists, but with Mr. Robert Dunsmuir, of this Province, the proprietor of the Wellington coal mines, as president. The chief engineer of the line is Mr. Joseph Hunter, whose father laid out the grounds of Balmoral, under the supervision of the late Prince Consort. The contracts for clearing and making the roadway have all been given out, and it is expected that the line will be open for traffic within two years. A line of steamers is certain to connect Coal Harbour, on the mainland, either with Nanaimo or Chemainus on the island coast; and it will then be seen whether Victoria will retain her pre-eminence in the province, or for business purposes, at least, will be superseded by Vancouver, as the Pacific terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway has been named. Her natural position and her climate will always make Victoria the favourite place of residence. She is styled a "city of homes" by her American neighbours. There are not a few houses of great pretensions to size or magnificence in the rambling suburbs; but spacious one-storeyed cottages, with verandahs overgrown with honeysuckle and trailing roses, have hitherto been the favourite dwelling houses. The difficulty of getting a good house built probably leads to the preference for these pretentious but beautiful and picturesque of the commonplace villas which are now being built cannot compare with them. However, I must not abuse the villas, for one of them has been converted by us into a very pleasant home.

The climate of Victoria resembles that of our coast towns in England. When we arrived in March, crocuses, snowdrops, and daffodils were blooming in the gardens, and the smell of sweet violets filled the air. Within a month the cherry and then the apple trees were in blossom, and there was scarcely a corner of the town where they were not to be seen. Sweetfruit and wild dogwood covered every old fence, and overran the sides of the gutters. Only for a fortnight in August was the heat too great for walking to be pleasant. However warm the day, a cool southern breeze, blowing across the Olympians, would rid our faces of the sun's rays; and there were few evenings in which a wrap of some kind was not acceptable. The snow did not vanish from the Olympians before August. When everything in Victoria was covered with frost and snow, and even the dark fir trees were stretched out white rather than green, and the grass and flowers remained dark and sombre. And now that spring has come again, and flowers are once more filling the gardens with perfume, the Olympians have donned their white raiment, and they too look fresh and delicate, and are again fair in the sunshine. One feels that among them, if anywhere, must live

the island village of Avillon,
Where fairs will bring us, rain, or any snow,
Nor ever will fade our loyalty.

If the summer evenings are colder the winters are, on the whole, less severe than in England. There are heavy rains in the autumn; and last December we had what was regarded by the older inhabitants as an exceptionally cold "snap." For a fortnight the thermometer registered from eight to four degrees of frost, and this was intensified by the north wind which found its way into every corner of the slightly built frame houses. Every morning the cream in the pantry, the water in the iver, and even the beer had to be thawed; while our China bowl put on a very dry some additional article of clothing, and he more than once, in the day, had to do anything else. But this state of things, happily, did not last long. In January and February we had mild moist weather, with showers of rain every day; then spring burst suddenly upon us.

A year has passed away since we landed at the Outer Wharf on that lovely Sunday morning in March. England now does not seem to be so far distant from us as Vancouver Island to our friends at home. Indeed, a young Englishman assured me that one of the advantages of Victoria is that it is not "shut off" from the world, or from what has hitherto made our world. "It is only twelve days from London," we continued, speaking as we should have done a year ago of a country place in Surrey or Kent, connected by railway trains with town. This young fellow's ideas are somewhat ahead of his time, no doubt. Nevertheless, the day is approaching when the wonderful power of steam will practically annihilate distance. At any rate, within a few months we shall be able to travel from Vancouver Island to England without setting foot on foreign soil.

As regards to the Quebec *Chronicle*, there are some favourable features in the tint or situation. That journal writes that "the repress natives from this port who have visited Europe this winter have returned with an amount of business to timber far in excess of last year, and more than they anticipated. They have sold fairly well, also some descriptions of timber. In this connection the decrease in the production of white pine in the Ottawa district will, it is stated, be about one third less than last year. The demand for white pine square timber has not, however, fallen in the home market. A considerable quantity of this timber is reported still in first hands. On the whole a good spring trade is anticipated. The late frosts have prevented somewhat disastrous to mill owners, but the extent of losses is difficult to ascertain."

THE MANITOBA WHEAT CROP. The secretary of the Farmers' Union of Manitoba reports that the prospects are that a more abundant crop, in better condition, will be harvested this year than last, and this will to a large extent compensate for any smaller acreage that may be sown. It is noteworthy that the entire western portions of Canada are undergoing a marked change in the more extensive pursuit of mixed farming rather than the exclusive growth of grain. The estimate is that with an average crop Manitoba alone will have a surplus of fully three million bushels of wheat to export from this year's crop, or one-third more than last season. There is, in addition, the vast wheat area of the Canadian North-West Territories, reports from which would tend to show that the yield will be about the average, while greater care has been generally noticeable among the farmers in the preparation of the soil and choice of seed.

